

CDC Update to Information and Guidance, January 2-9, 2004

The following additions or updates were made to CDC guidance and/or information during the period of January 2 to January 9, 2004. If you have any questions on these or other clinical issues, please call our Clinician's Information Line at 877-554-4625.

INFLUENZA <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

The following changes or additions describe flu activity in the United States for the December 28-January 3 reporting period and provide updates to public/patient education information:

Weekly Report: Influenza Summary Update
Week ending January 3, 2004-Week 53

The number of states reporting widespread influenza activity decreased during week 53 (December 28, 2003 - January 3, 2004), the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza also decreased, and the percentage of patient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) decreased in all 9 surveillance regions with an overall national percentage of 6.2%. However, pneumonia and influenza (P & I) mortality (9.4%) continued to exceed the epidemic threshold for week 53 (8.0%). Six hundred forty-one (20.7%) of 3,092 specimens collected from throughout the United States and tested by U. S. World Health Organization (WHO) and National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) collaborating laboratories were positive for influenza. Thirty-eight state health departments, the District of Columbia, and New York City reported widespread influenza activity, 9 states reported regional activity, 1 state reported local activity, 1 state reported sporadic activity, and 1 state did not report. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

Colds and Flu: What to do if you Get Sick

Updated to include information on distinguishing colds from flu.
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/sick.htm>

Questions & Answers: Cold Versus Flu
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm>

Public/patient education page designed to help distinguish between cold and flu symptoms.

Preventing the Spread of Influenza (the Flu) in Schools: Interim Guidance for School Administrators, Teachers and Staff

Describes what measures faculty and administrators can take to control the spread of influenza in school settings.
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/schoolguidance.htm>

Cover Your Cough

A fact sheet for the general public describing how to limit the spread of germs through hand-washing, use of alcohol gels, and covering the mouth during coughs and sneezes.
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>

SARS <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/index.htm>

Two key SARS documents were updated this week:

Public Health Guidance for Community-Level Preparedness and Response to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Version 2

This is an updated version of the draft guidance document issued by CDC in November 2003. CDC has revised the draft based on comments received from public health partners, healthcare providers, and others. CDC will continue to update the document as necessary to incorporate additional comments and to reflect increased understanding of SARS-CoV transmission dynamics and the availability of improved prevention tools.
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/guidance/>

Clinical Guidance on the Identification and Evaluation of Possible SARS-CoV Disease among Persons Presenting with Community-Acquired Illness
<<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/guidance/>> Version 2

This updated version of SARS clinical guidance clarifies that, in a setting of ongoing SARS-CoV transmission in a facility or community, the presence of either fever or lower respiratory symptoms should prompt further evaluation for SARS-CoV disease. In addition, in accordance with the new SARS case definition, when persons have a high risk of exposure to SARS-CoV (e.g., persons previously identified through contact tracing or self-identified as close contacts of a laboratory-confirmed case of SARS-CoV disease; persons who are epidemiologically linked to a laboratory-confirmed case of SARS-CoV disease), the clinical screening criteria should be expanded to include, in addition to fever or lower respiratory symptoms, the presence of other early symptoms of SARS-CoV disease. The material in this document supplements the information provided in Public Health Guidance for Community-Level Preparedness and

Response to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) (see preceding document).
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/clinicalguidance.htm>